

Today's News - Wednesday, April 29, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tomorrow is this week's "floating" no-newsletter day - we'll be back Friday, May 1.

- ANN Feature: Gisolfi considers the saga of New York City's West Street: "If a 19th-century method of moving traffic can succeed in a city as congested as Manhattan, it can work in many other cities as well."
- Russell wishes the new Whitney was "gutsier": even though it's "a startling, aggressive departure" for Piano, he "cleaves to his characteristic elegance - courtly when he needs to be gutsy, even operatic."
- Merrick's take on Piano's "picture palace": "It's not an icon. It's not sexy," but the Whitney "may be the first post-Bilbao 'headline' art palace that has really added something respectful to a city's existing character."
- Clemence's Q&A with the Whitney's Chief Curator De Salvo, who "talks Piano, delves into the often-fraught relationship between art and architecture, the brilliance of the old Breuer building, and explains why the new Whitney just works" (and what makes for a good loading dock).
- Artist and cultural critic Robinson on the Whitney as "an avant-garde art machine": "The building does rather suggest a giant appliance - not unlike Brad Cloepfil's Frigidaire of a Museum of Art and Design on Columbus Circle."
- Filler (in a January review we missed - gasp!) finds Piano's Pathé foundation in Paris to be his "hidden masterpiece," and ranks among the architect's "best works" that "far surpasses other recent, much higher-profile museum projects."
- Iovine cheers Phifer's "irreducibly refined and elegantly expressive new wing" of the Corning Museum of Glass that "goes a long way in harmonizing the cacophony of disparate parts" of the museum campus.
- With Expo Milano 2015 about to open, Lasky talks to U.S. Pavilion architect Biber re: what you'll find: "It is the very best and very worst of design you're going to see in its concentrated form."
- Bernstein x 2: a lively Q&A with the New York-based architect who designed China's pavilion: "winning the invited competition was easy compared to getting the pavilion built" (but it looks cool!).
- He parses the details of what's going into New York's Arthur Ashe Stadium getting a steel "umbrella," and the "Zen garden" that will soon top SHoP's Barclays Center (not all are convinced).
- Eyefuls of Snøhetta's four-story outdoor play tower and playground, part of the Swarovski Crystal Worlds expansion in Austria: "a contrast between Swarovski crystal shapes and organic curves."
- Yoon's Sean Collier Memorial at MIT "has a powerful physical presence - but also a sinuous form that yields a sense of light and openness" (pix by Baan).
- Barcelona-based BCQ is remaking a "tired, old" pedestrian bridge into a glow-in-the-dark, self-cleaning, smog-eating sustainability machine" (hanging gardens included).
- How a chemist accidentally invented "an eco-friendly alternative to cement" that traps CO2 like a carbon sponge (but will it be viable for large-scale construction?).
- One we couldn't resist: Eyeful of No Man's Land Fort off the coast of southern England, a water-bound Victorian-era fort transformed into a luxury hotel (a nightclub, a mall, and heliports included).
- Designers & Books has high hopes to reprint "Ladislav Sutnar: Visual Design in Action," an "iconic 1961 book by the modernist graphic designer and pioneer of information design."
- Call for entries: Solar Embodied Environment Design/SEED for Future Competition to design a small, light and impermanent habitat + Call for Abstracts for the 8th International Urban Design Conference: "Empowering Change: Transformative Innovations and Projects" in Brisbane in November.

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INSIGHT: West Street: A Little-Noticed Success: If a 19th-century method of moving traffic can succeed in a city as congested as Manhattan, it can work in many other cities as well. By Peter Gisolfi, AIA, ASLA, LEED AP - [ArchNewsNow.com](#)

Manhattan's new Whitney: Don't be aloof: ...should have been gutsier: For Renzo Piano...whose speciality is geometrically immaculate refinement, the \$422m Whitney Museum is a startling, aggressive departure...collision of forms in concrete, painted steel and glass wedges itself into the jumble of neighbouring buildings...Yet Piano also cleaves to his characteristic elegance...courtly when he needs to be gutsy, even operatic. His bespoke details...play to the district's luxe homogenisation. By James S. Russell [images] - [The Economist \(UK\)](#)

Whitney Museum of American Art: Renzo Piano's picture palace: Is it an architectural icon? No. Is it as frightfully cool...No. And yet the Whitney seems unique...may be the first post-Bilbao "headline" art palace that has really added something respectful to a city's existing character...It's not an icon. It's not sexy. But its design has, in unexpectedly thoughtful ways, made great American art, and a great American city, much more vividly visible. By Jay Merrick -- [Marcel Breuer- Independent \(UK\)](#)

The Whitney's Chief Curator on How Renzo Piano's New Building "Stretches the Mind": Donna De Salvo talks Piano, delves into the often-fraught relationship between art and architecture, the brilliance of the old Breuer building, and explains why the new Whitney just works. By Paul Clemence [images] - [Metropolis Magazine](#)

Does the New Whitney Museum Hate America? Walter Robinson on Its Anti-Utopian Anxiety: The noted artist and cultural critic looks past the sunny vistas: ...despite the enduring popularity of museum bashing - is being greeted with tons of love. Has everyone gone soft? The building does rather suggest a giant appliance - an avant-garde art machine, perhaps? - not unlike architect Brad Cloepfil's Frigidaire of a Museum of Art and Design on Columbus Circle. - [New York Observer](#)

Renzo Piano's Hidden Masterpiece: Fondation Jérôme Seydoux-Pathé...With its ingenious demonstration of how to insert a work of avant-garde architecture into a historic setting, this voluptuously swelling aluminum-and-glass-clad form...ranks among Piano's best works...The scant attention [it] has received is all the more a pity since it far surpasses other recent, much higher-profile museum projects by the Renzo Piano Building Workshop. By Martin Filler [images] - [New York Review of Books](#)

Minimalist Makeover: The Corning Museum of Glass's new Contemporary Art + Design Wing, designed by Thomas Phifer and Partners, is a unifying structure of minimalist sensibility...goes a long way in harmonizing the cacophony of disparate parts...a wide-ranging history of modern architecture culminating in Phifer's irreducibly refined and elegantly expressive new wing... By Julie V. Iovine -- [Wallace K. Harrison \(1951\); Gunnar Birkerts \(1976\); Smith-Miller + Hawkinson; Bohlin Cywinski Jackson \(2001\)- Wall Street Journal](#)

A Feast of Architectural Styles for Expo Milano 2015: "Feeding the Planet": "It's every nation attempting to express itself in a building. It is the very best and very worst of design you're going to see in its concentrated form." By Julie Lasky -- [James Biber; Daniel Libeskind; Carlo Ratti; Michael Bierut/Pentagram; Thinc Design- New York Times](#)

Newsmaker: Yichen Lu: The New York-based architect chats about his design for China's pavilion at the Milan World Expo...winning the invited competition was easy compared to getting the pavilion built. By Fred A. Bernstein -- [Studio Link-Arc \[images\]- Architectural Record](#)

Twin Peaks: Two Renowned New York Sports Facilities to Get New Roofs: 5,000 Tons of Steel for an Umbrella: Arthur Ashe Stadium, the 23,000-seat centerpiece of the National Tennis Center + 1,800 Tons of Steel for a "Zen Garden" on Barclays Center. By Fred A. Bernstein -- [Rossetti Architects/WSP; SHoP Architects/AECOM- Architectural Record](#)

Schnhetta, Cao Perrot and Schlägl & Süß Architekten present €34m Swarovski Crystal Worlds expansion in Wattens, Austria: ...a contrast between Swarovski crystal shapes and organic curves...a four-storey outdoor playtower and adjacent playground, a shop entrance, plus a café and restaurant. -- Andre Heller (1995) [images]- CLAD (Community of Leisure Architects & Designers)

New memorial a labor of love: Architects and engineers detail their novel design for MIT's Sean Collier Memorial: ...the MIT police officer killed in the line of duty on April 18, 2013...the 190-ton memorial has a powerful physical presence - but also a sinuous form that yields a sense of light and openness. -- J. Meejin Yoon; John Ochsendorf [images]- MIT News

Architects in Barcelona are remaking this tired, old bridge into a glow-in-the-dark, smog-eating sustainability machine: BCQ...to upgrade the arterial Sarajevo Bridge in Barcelona to be self-cleaning...and boast hanging gardens to boot...to improve the pedestrian experience through better lighting and air quality. [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

University student accidentally invents cement alternative that traps CO2: When chemist David Stone was a PhD student at the University of Arizona, an experiment that went wrong allowed him to create an eco-friendly alternative to cement...acts as a type of carbon sponge – Ferrock only hardens when it is exposed to high amounts of CO2...the future is promising. -- Iron Shell [video]- Architecture & Design (Australia)

This 19th-century sea fort was converted into a luxury hotel: The redevelopment added a nightclub, a mall and even a laser tag arena...No Man's Land Fort off the coast of southern England...built between 1867 and 1880...Victorian-era fort has been completely refurbished by AmaZing Venues... [images]- The Real Deal (NYC)

Designers & Books Launches a Kickstarter to Reprint "Ladislav Sutnar: Visual Design in Action": Facsimile reprint of an iconic 1961 book by modernist graphic designer and pioneer of information design...has been called a "lost milestone" and a "treasure." - Designers & Books

Call for entries: Solar Embodied Environment Design/SEED for Future Competition (international): design a small, light and impermanent habitat; no fee; deadline: July 31 - @ALL / Qingyun Ma

Call for entries: Abstracts for 8th International Urban Design Conference: "Empowering Change: Transformative Innovations and Projects," November 16-18. Brisbane, Australia; deadline: August 7 - Urban Design Australia

Henning Larsen Architects: Moesgaard Museum: Surrounded by woods on the outskirts of Aarhus, Denmark, the new MOMU offers a new perspective on the role of the museum as a public space. By Robert Martin [images]

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